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C O N F I D E N T I A L KINSHASA 001099

SIPDIS

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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [KPKO](#) [PREL](#) [MOPS](#) [CG](#)

SUBJECT: MONUC OPERATION SENDS SIGNAL TO FDLR

Classified By: Polcouns Mel Sanderson for Reasons 1.4 B and D

1. (C) On July 4 MONUC launched operation "Falcon Sweep" in the territories of Walungu and Karambe (located about 10km east and 50 km south east of Bukavu, South Kivu). The small (about 80-man) mission is designed primarily to determine the locations of FDLR elements, particularly concentrations of so-called Rastas, and to provide information on the strengths and weaknesses of the FDLR in the area. This intelligence could serve as the basis for future, more extensive operations. While not the beginning of a MONUC military action against the FDLR, the presence of Pakistani peacekeepers in one of the zones with heavy FDLR presence is designed to send a clear signal to the negative forces that they should actively consider utilizing the voluntary return option. MONUC also hopes that, as has been the case with militias in Ituri, by moving into areas with significant negative force presence that it will begin to reduce the FDLR's effective freedom of operations, and in turn ratchet up the pressure on the FDLR to depart or risk conflict.

2. (C) Comment: MONUC's progressive strategy of increasing pressure against the FDLR comes in the wake of the apparent failure of the Sant' Egidio diplomatic effort, and it represents a first step to put pressure on the FDLR to disarm and repatriate. Similar tactics in Ituri have greatly diminished the numbers of active militia in Province Oriental, but it is far from clear that these relatively limited tactics will be as effective against the entrenched FDLR. End Comment.

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